NATURAL NEWS

The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

Weekly Staff Newsletter
October 30, 1998

Art of the Motorcycle opens Saturday!

The months of preparation are almost over . . . on Saturday, November 7, the Field Museum's newest special exhibit opens to the public.

There are several special events this week leading up to the grand opening:

Staff and Volunteer Preview
Wednesday, November 3
2:30 p.m. Lecture by David Foster in LH2
3:00 p.m. Tour of the exhibit

Orientation for Opening Day volunteers
Wednesday, November 4
5:30 p.m. in the Founders' Room

Press Preview
Thursday, November 5 at 10 a.m.

Women's Board "Bikers Ball"
Friday, November 6 in Stanley Field Hall

Opening Day, Saturday, November 7
Motorcycle Ride from Montrose Harbor down Lake Shore Drive to The Field Museum beginning at 8 a.m.
Special preview of *Art of the Motorcycle*
Exhibit opens to the public

FIELD NOTES

Week of November 2

Public Events/Special Events

Art of the Motorcycle press preview
• Thursday, 10 a.m.

Women's Board "Bikers Ball"
• Friday evening in SFH

Motorcycle Ride
Montrose Harbor to Field Museum
• Saturday, 8 a.m.

Art of the Motorcycle opens
• Saturday

Staff/Volunteer Events

Art of the Motorcycle staff preview
• Wednesday
Lecture 2:30 p.m. in LH2
Exhibit tour 3 p.m.

Museum Highlights tours
Meet at totem poles 9 a.m. & noon
• Tuesday and Thursday

Tuesday Noon Lecture Series
• Zoology Classroom

Aerobics Class
• Tuesday and Thursday, 5 p.m.

ATTENTION *ART OF THE MOTORCYCLE* VOLUNTEERS

Notice to all staff who are volunteering on Saturday morning, November 7, opening day of the *Art of the Motorcycle* exhibit: **the orientation meeting on Wednesday, November 4 is at 5:30 in the Founders' Room.** JAM Productions will provide all the information needed for The Ride, as well as refreshments beginning at 5 o'clock. Please let **Patti Stratton** (ext. 526) know of any changes in your plans for November 7 or if you are unable to attend on November 4. Thanks!

Submitted by **Patti Stratton**

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Trips to the Huron Mountains, North Carolina, and China wrap up the field work part of U.S. – China Cooperative Project on Fungi

Qiuxin Wu, Greg Mueller, Betty Strack, (Botany) and **Todd Osmundson** (intern in Botany) and Chinese Collaborators Yongqing Huang and Shouyu Guo (Systematic Mycology and Lichenology Laboratory, Institute of Microbiology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing) spent the end of summer and fall undertaking fieldwork as part of their research project investigating biogeographic relationships between the macrofungal mycota of eastern North America and temperate eastern Asia.

Highlands Biological Station, North Carolina was the first stop for Qiuxin, Todd, Yongqing and Shouyu . It had been relatively dry but enough fungi were found to make the trip a success. Then it was off to China for one month. This year's trip proved tremendously successful. The first 12 days were spent in Yunnan Province in the southwestern part of the country. They set up and sampled two 0.1 ha (roughly 1/4 acre) plots, one in a Fagaceae dominated forest, the other in a mixed forest with Fagaceae and Pinaceae. Over 80 species of macrofungi were recorded from each, but there was little overlap between the two plots. They then traveled to the northeast province of Jilin near the north Korean border. This was their third trip to the Changbai Mountain International Biosphere Reserve, and it again proved highly diverse with over 180 species of macrofungi recorded from one 0.1ha plot in a mixed forest. This diversity is the highest point diversity yet reported from any part of the world.

The last day they organized and presented a mini-symposium at the Institute of Microbiology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing on the results of their work. Mueller started off by presenting their investigations into morphological and molecular divergence between disjunct species of Suillus. Next up were Shouyu and Professor Wei (Academician in the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Research Associate, Botany) who presented the results of the work Shouyu undertook during his 6-month residency here at The Field Museum. Then Yongqing provided an overview of biodiversity research. Finally, Qiuxin presented preliminary results of their diversity studies in Changbai.

Qiuxin, Greg, Betty, and Todd ended the year's field work in the Huron Mountains. While it had been very dry all summer and early fall in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, rains preceding their visit brought out a last flush of fungi. Even though there were few fungi on the soil, the number of wood and litter inhabiting species was impressive and they reported 82 species from one 0.1ha plot. It is anticipated that this is a very low estimate since there were undoubtedly a number of soil fungi that were not fruiting due to dry conditions. Besides fine fungi, the tree color was spectacular. **Fernando Fernández** (Botany) joined the group on the trips to Highlands Biological Station and the Huron Mountains. He collected wood-inhabiting ascomycetes as part of Sabine Huhndorf's PEET project.

* SAVE THE DATE *

A special toast to Steve and Laura Gates
Thursday, December 10
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Stanley Field Hall
Details to follow

Submitted by **Stephanie Powell**

Museum Facilities Advisory Group forms

Recently, representatives from all areas of the Museum have come together to form a Facilities Advisory Group. The goal of this organization is to discuss issues concerning the physical plant of the Museum with respect to problems of humidity and pest control and other issues related to the many changes taking place in the physical structure of the building. The Facilities Advisory Group will meet monthly to talk about current facilities projects in an effort to anticipate problems and find solutions. The organization will also act to alert people about projects that may affect their areas and, working with Facility Planning and Operations, help to keep everything on track while minimizing problems during construction periods.

At the initial meeting of the Facilities Advisory Group held on October 12, it was suggested that one of the first issues the Group should address is the cleanliness of the building. In this regard, the Facilities Advisory Group will be developing plans for the First Annual Clean-Up Week at the Museum. The details and planning of Clean-Up Week will be the primary agenda item at the November 3 meeting of the Facilities Advisory Group.

In addition to pest control and cleanliness of the building, the committee will also be addressing issues related to heat and humidity as they affect collections, not only in collections storage areas but in cases and dioramas throughout the Museum. The Capital Improvement Project that will upgrade and replace many of our current HVAC systems is currently under way. The Facilities Advisory Group will meet with leaders of that project, including engineers and other professionals, to be sure that we address both the long-term and short-term needs of the Museum as it relates to heat and humidity.

We would certainly appreciate hearing from you on any topics you may have, which you would like to bring before the Facilities Advisory Group. The group will be meeting the first Tuesday of every month. Below is a list of staff members who serve in this important organization. You should feel free to contact any of the Facilities Advisory Group members with suggestions for discussion at future meetings:

Frantz Cartwright
Ron Cundiff
Lawrence Heaney
Debbie Kvapil
John Mazza
Mike Paha
Rodger Patience
Ernst Pierre-Toussaint
Laura Sadler
Cap Sease
Bill Stanley
Shawn VanDerziel
Diane White

Submitted by **Jim Croft**

NOTICE TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

On Wednesday, November 4, Program Maintenance will begin cleaning all Museum windows, and will be needing access to all areas of the building where there are windows. Facility Planning and Operations will be contacting the departments and offices where cleaning is scheduled so that work can be coordinated with the personnel of the impacted areas. If you have any questions please contact **Ernst Pierre-Toussaint** at ext. 228.

Bakken returns from NSF Regional Grants Conference

Sponsored Programs Coordinator **Deborah Bakken** recently returned from the National Science Foundation's Regional Grants Conference. The meetings were highly informative; the presentations covered many aspects of NSF's programs and organization. Following are some highlights of interest to PIs.

- The new grant proposal guide for 1999 is out. It can be found at: **http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gp.**
- Recent additions to the FastLane system include templates for annual, interim, and final project reports for PIs. PIs are encouraged to send in interim reports on significant results; these will remain on FastLane and can be used when preparing annual and final reports.
- Accountability and financial documentation are increasingly important to NSF as it responds to requirements of the GPRA (Government Performance and Results Act). Cost sharing agreements will need to be fully documented as these will receive additional attention.
- Education and educational outreach are an increasingly important component in the newer programs. Program directors are encouraging PIs and institutions to think creatively with their resources and research programs to increase educational opportunities.

Please call (ext. 877) or e-mail (dbakken@fmnh.org) with any NSF-related questions.

Tuesday at Noon Seminar Series continues

On Tuesday, October 27, Scott Krocken, graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley, spoke to us on his studies in the lichen genus Letharia. Using both morphological and intensive molecular analyses, Scott found that there are probably six definable species where only two had been earlier recognized. The symbiosis of fungus and alga in this lichen genus, and patterns of sexuality in different lineages, provide Scott many opportunities to study larger questions, such as the long-term genetic effects of reduced sexuality and the differing histories of the two coevolutionary partners.

Next week's seminar, entitled "SUE: Anatomy of a Dinosaur Project," will be given by **Bill Simpson** of the Geology Department. Please join us in the Zoology classroom at 12 noon on Tuesday, November 3.

Submitted by **Bill Burger**

$$ FINANCE FORUM $$

In order to ensure that 1998 purchase order expenses hit our 1998 budget, please have all purchase orders in **Tom Geary**'s office no later than Friday, November 27. Purchase orders with November dates on them will be charged to your 1998 budget (assuming of course that your budget is not overspent). Purchase orders received in December and after will hit the year in which title to the goods or service is received. If you have a question please call **Tom Geary** at ext. 278.

John McPhee profiles Willy Bemis in New Yorker article

The October 19 issue of *The New Yorker* features a delightful article by author John McPhee (1998 Founders' Council Award recipient) detailing the experiences of **Willy Bemis** (Research Associate, Geology, and Professor, University of Massachusetts – Amherst) at the Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo. The article provides an overview of the annual fishing tournament and the various characters that compete in it, with Willy's presence ("Can we have your fish? We're marine scientists. We're going to do research.") providing the thread that ties the whole tale together. Author McPhee met Ichthyologist Bemis at the Founders' Council Award of Merit dinner in April, the talked turned to fishing, and the rest is this story. Here's the final paragraph of the article, with Willy winding up three days of collecting and filleting:

> *After three days and nights, Willy's body is hurting; his hands are puffy and sore. What drives him on is that everywhere he looks he sees another golden chance. He has worked in the Tana River, in Kenya; in the Brisbane River, in Australia; in the Comoro Islands, off East Africa; in the ponds of the Osage Catfisheries Company, in Osage Beach, Missouri, which are full of paddlefish, sturgeons, and gars. "It's an unparalleled opportunity," he says, once more sharpening his knife. I couldn't collect like this anywhere in the world."*

Early in the article McPhee makes mention of Willy's collaboration with our own **Lance Grande** on their massive and masterful study of Amiid fishes.

Archaeology magazine features five notables – including one of ours – in Anniversary issue

In honor of the 50th year of publication of the Archaeological Institute of America's magazine *Archaeology*, the editors invited five of the world's leading experts to contribute celebratory articles looking back over the last five decades of research in their particular regions of the world – and forward into the future. One of the five was none other than our own Curator of Oceanic Archaeology and Ethnology, **John Edward Terrell**, whose article "The Prehistoric Pacific" can be found in the latest issue of the popular magazine (circulation 200,000), which arrived last week at bookstores everywhere.

Anthropology staff join Oriental Institute dig in Turkey

Cap Sease (Conservation) and **David S. Reese** (Anthropology) recently returned from three weeks of excavation at the Chalcolithic (ca. 5000 B.C.) village of Tell Kurdu in southern Turkey, about 20 miles from modern Antakya (ancient Antioch) and a short hop from the Syrian border. Sease was the staff conservator and Reese the faunal analyst. The site was first excavated by the University of Chicago for ten days in 1938, and faunal remains from those excavations are presently housed in The Field Museum and have been studied by Reese. The current excavations are directed by Dr. K. Aslihan Yener of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. While basically a Chicago project, the project staff included people from the University of Pennsylvania, Yale, Turkey, Belgium, and Japan.

Brazilian publications profile AquaRAP

Our own AquaRAP (Aqautic Rapid Assesment Program) team made headlines in several Brazilian publications in September. The national news magazine *Veja*, as well as two newspapers from Campo Grande, in Mato Grosso do Sul – *Correio do Estado* and *Diário da Serra* – carried stories about the efforts of The Field Museum – Conservation International collaboration to assess the biodiversity of the enormous wetland known as the Pantanal (in western Brazil bordering Bolivia and Paraguay. The Pantanal is threatened by deforestation in the headwaters and along river margins, and by the planned channelization of the Paraguay river ("Hidrovia" project). The stories note that the team of 35 scientists from the U.S., Ecuador, Brazil, Peru, and Venezuela covered 4,400 kilometers in 21 days and registered a number of new

species (including many new to science), and highlight the participation of The Field Museum's **Debby Moskovits** (ECP) and **Barry Chernoff** (Zoology/Fishes). Those who'd like to see evidence of curators in action can pick up *Veja* (September 16 issue) and see a photo of Barry, waist-deep in the Rio Negro pulling in a net full of what the editors would like to believe are man-eating piranhas, but if not, are certainly something equally exciting to science.

Sue debuts on web

Sue, the largest and most complete T. rex, now has its own web site at The Field Museum at **www.fmnh.org/sue**. Our Sue site went on-line last Wednesday afternoon, October 21 (web surfers may have discovered our testing prototype the week before). This new site promises to be a hit with a Sue timeline, an image gallery, fun stuff just for kids, plus lots of information on the preparation of Sue. For those of you who like hard numbers, in its first week this new site garnered 15 of the top 100 pages for our entire site ("Lions of Tsavo" is still first, with 24 pages). We'll update the site on a monthly basis, adding new kids' games, the latest dinosaur of the month, and more. Thanks to everyone who helped with this project (visit the site's credits page for full details). Special thanks to Web Content Specialist **Allyson Meyer** (Academic Affairs, ext. 734) who designed and developed the site. Let us know what you think – please direct all comments and questions to Web Manager **Lori Breslauer** at ext. 627.

Field Museum web site tops list of "top 10" web museums

The Field Museum's web site is number one on a list of the top ten museum web sites from around the world, published in the Thursday, October 22 *St. Louis Post-Dispatch "GetOut" Magazine*. Sites were chosen based on the clarity of information, speed, and simplicity of use. Here's an excerpt: "As more online museums pop up, this site should be a prototype. There is no wasted space, the colors are sharp and friendly, and the pages are concise with no teasers that say you have to visit the museum to get the scope of the exhibits. It never lapses into marketing gimmicks other than to offer quality Web design, which is the best marketing of all. Also, it's not just for lurkers – the deeper you dig into this site, the more in-depth the information." The other sites ranked (in descending order) include the Exploratorium, San Francisco; the St. Louis Science Center (of course); the Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum, Chicago; The Louvre Museum, Paris; the Newseum, Arlington, VA; The Children's Museum of Indianapolis; the Museum of Bad Art, New England; the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam; and the Computer Museum, Boston.

ATTENTION SMOKERS

In response to some questions and confusion, the smokers' marquee installed on October 22 (under the overhang adjacent to the pillars on the terrace just east of the South Entrance doors) is available for use *at any time*. The marquee will be there until April 1, 1999, and all smokers are encouraged to use it for smoking breaks both during the day and after hours. If you have questions or require further information, please contact **Diane White** at ext. 345.

Natural News

The *Natural News* is edited by **Rodger Patience** in the Development office (ext. 617, patience@fmnh.org) and **Erica Kelly** in the Finance Department (ext. 584, ekelly@fmnh.org). Submissions are welcome via e-mail or on disk in Microsoft Word or WordPerfect format. The deadline for submissions is Tuesday at noon. Remember – write early and often!